

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS.

Five Hundred Thousand Dollars Raised by Jews for Survival of Judaism in America.

The first half million dollars in the nation-wide campaign of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations to insure the survival of Judaism in America has been raised according to announcement made by Manny Straus, chairman of the Advisory Board. Pledges totaling that amount and payable in ten years have been received at headquarters of the Union. The campaign will last thirty-five weeks and an effort will be made to raise a fund of \$3,500,000, to be devoted to a ten year program of expansion.

This sum represents contributions from Jews throughout the nation. Its realization marks the first definite step taken by the Committees in the actual work of the campaign.

In many cities organization work is still going and on it will probably be another week before returns are received from these centers. Scores of municipalities have still to complete the preliminary work of the campaign, but assurances received from chairmen in metropolitan centers in the latter category are to the effect that the work of money raising will be embarked upon before the expiration of the current week.

Mr. Strauss, when discussing progress of the movement to date, said:

"We have reached the first milestone in the campaign. In fact it would be no prophesy at this time to venture that we are going to reach our goal without any difficulty whatsoever. This sum represents only a few of the larger cities that have started upon the actual business of money raising. Reports received thus far indicate that we were not over optimistic as to the way the movement would be received by Jews throughout America.

"Letters coming in show that a keen spirit of rivalry has sprung up between the various cities and one is determined to outdo the other. In Cincinnati the work is going on apace and according to recent reports, it is well out in the lead in the race for the goal."

According to J. Walter Freiberg, President of the Union, there are approximately 3,000,000 Jews in America, of which number only 200,000 have had the advantages of religious instruction. He pointed out that there are only one thousand synagogues with an average seating capacity of 200. This situation is one of many, equally distressing to leading Jews in every section of the nation, with which the Union will endeavor to cope through its program of expansion.

It is also estimated that there are from 10,000 to 15,000 Jewish men and women in colleges and universities, who are being permitted to get along without Judaism. Through neglect, it was said, touch with these had been lost. An effort will be made to reach every college and university in the United States where there are groups of Jewish students. Contact will be established through traveling secretaries. The duty of the latter will also be to create relationship between Jewish students and neighboring Jewish communities.

The three major branches of the U. A. H. C. under the jurisdiction of which these activities will come are: Hebrew Union College, Board of Delegates on Civil Rights and the Department of Synagogue and School Extension.

Other important functions of the movement will be to establish a pension fund to provide for religious teachers and leaders during the declining years of their lives and to create a building fund through which loans will be made in small amounts at nominal rates of interest to Jewish congregations desiring to build their own synagogues.

IN THE FIELD OF JEWISH LABOR

The Season of Conventions—Bakers Lead—The Convention of Workmen's Circles—Furriers Seek to Shorten Working Hours—To Make Room for More Workers.

BY ELIAS LIEBERMAN.

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It seems that in America everything has its season. Out of season nothing is done. In the labor movement summer is the season for conventions. Let no one be surprised, therefore, to hear of this or that union holding a convention. It is all simply explained—now is the season for such functions.

The Bakers' Union is calling a special convention. Passover, the week during which, in legend, the Jews were freed from Egyptian slavery, has a different significance for the Jewish baker. It is the baker's really free week. The Jewish population eats matzos instead of bread, and therefore the bakers are enforced to rest for a week. Passover also is the week during which the bakers used to renew their agreements with their bosses. Just at the time when the Jewish populace is so greedy for a piece of bread, the bakers would say to their employers: Renew the agreement or else the masses will have to continue eating matzos.

In the last few years the condition of the Jewish bakers has greatly improved, very largely because the greatest difficulty of the bakers' immigration has vanished from their horizon. The bakers have always suffered from unemployment. Seldom did the baker work a full week. Four days in the week was about the most employment that he could find. And it is self-evident that if you don't work you don't earn, and if you don't earn you simply cannot make a living. But during the war their conditions have greatly improved, because no new immigrants entered the country.

Now that the war has ceased and immigration will sooner or later begin, the old evils are expected to return. In a letter sent by the Jewish bakers in Europe to the Jewish bakers in America this danger is pointed out. The European workers ask of their American fellow-tradesmen not charity, but simply that they be afforded the possibility of so improving their state in the old home that it will not be imperative for them to emigrate.

That the local bakers' union has grasped the importance of this problem may be clearly seen from the fact that it has called a special convention to consider how it can help the bakers across the sea. It is beyond doubt that the convention will decide to support the bakers. But the problem is an extremely difficult one. Something of a permanent nature will have to be done; temporary aid will not solve the problem. Perhaps the convention will find the necessary solution.

The success of the Workmen's Circle is remarkable in many respects. A small group of individuals came together about twenty years ago and founded a Workmen's Circle. The whole membership consisted then of several hundred people. Now after

twenty years work, the Workmen's Circle hold in its ranks about eight hundred thousand. Originally the purpose of the movement was mutual aid, sick benefit, consumption relief, etc. Its activity, however, spread to many other fields in the social and strictly Jewish life. The organization now has 632 branches in the United States and Canada. These branches are the centers of manifold activities,—trade right to subscribe to his own, the Jewish nation.

In the Workmen's Circle are reflected all the efforts of the labor movement. The remarkable part of it all is that this versatility and wide variation in activity does not harm the or-

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